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Kelly Administration Announces Ryan Ewalt as New Chief Operating Officer, Erskine Oglesby as Deputy Administrator for Community Development

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn.—Mayor Tim Kelly’s administration today announced Ryan Ewalt will join the City of Chattanooga as Chief Operating Officer; and Erskine Oglesby will serve as Deputy Administrator for Community Development under current Administrator Anthony Sammons. Both Ewalt and Oglesby will assume their appointed roles in late November.

“Great cities start with great teams. That’s why I’m excited that Ryan and Erskine will be bringing their skills, experience, and heart for public service to the City of Chattanooga,” said Mayor Tim Kelly. “From years of experience at some of our region and nation’s most reputable and successful businesses, as well as some of our community’s most valuable non-profit institutions, we’re assembling a senior team that can get big things done for our residents.”



Working out of the Mayor’s Office as Chief Operating Officer (COO), Ewalt will oversee the day-to-day operations of municipal government and ensure the City pursues its goals with a proven collaborative and data-informed approach. The COO will also be responsible for helping foster an organizational culture of efficiency, excellence in constituent service, and set clear standards for accountability and success within and across City departments.

Ryan Ewalt comes to the City with 17 years of operations experience spanning the insurance, automotive, and consulting industries. He’s currently an Assistant Vice President and Officer at Chattanooga-based Unum Group where he leads a 100-member team dedicated to solving complex customer-service challenges. Prior to Unum, Ewalt helped launch Chattanooga’s Volkswagen plant and secure the Atlas SUV for their manufacturing line. In addition to his insurance and automotive work, he was a PricewaterhouseCoopers consultant to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

He holds a master's degree in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina, where his studies focused on improving productivity and development-review processes for local governments. His undergraduate degree is in Systems Engineering from the University of Virginia.

"I'm honored to be joining Mayor Kelly's team and am excited to help lead the important work of operationalizing his vision for One Chattanooga throughout our City," said Ewalt. "I'll be bringing some of the lessons I've learned in the private sector to my new role—from how to build effective and efficient teams, using data to drive innovation, and how to work collaboratively across departments—to help deliver better services and results for our residents."

The Chattanooga Department of Community Development oversees neighborhood services,



community centers, community development and other assistance programs, and coordinates with workforce-development initiatives. As Deputy Administrator, Oglesby will support the Mayor's and the Administrator's goals by directing, planning, and organizing Community Development services, programs, and operations; as well as crafting and meeting department and City performance measures as established by the Mayor, the Administrator of Community Development, and Chattanooga City Council.

Erskine Oglesby comes to the Department with an extensive professional and volunteer service-record in the public and nonprofit sectors, and previously served on the Chattanooga City Council representing District 7 from 2017–2021. His career experience includes corporate engagement for the

United Way of Greater Chattanooga, as well as business services for the Southeast Tennessee Development District. At SETDD Oglesby promoted the Career Center and area businesses, administered workforce-training grants, and advocated for people with disabilities to receive employment and training opportunities.

Prior to SETDD, Oglesby managed operation centers for the Salvation Armies of Mississippi and Louisiana where he provided financial and other community support as the Gulf Coast region recovered from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He also served for over a decade in executive positions for YMCA affiliates across the country. Oglesby has volunteered as president of the 100 Black Men of Chattanooga, and the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. He's held board-governance roles with the Dodson Avenue/Southside Community Health Center, the Bessie Smith Cultural Center, WTCI-TV, and other community organizations. Oglesby holds a bachelor's degree in Healthcare Administration from Tennessee State University.

“It’s a thrill to bring my professional and volunteer experience in community service to such an impactful role for the city I love,” said Erskine Oglesby. “Working with Mayor Kelly and his team, Tony and the great folks at the Department, is the perfect way for me to continue helping to lift up and provide access to opportunity for all Chattanooga residents and neighborhoods.”

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